

CLAIMS

1. A method of treating marine growth on a surface,
including the steps of confining a volume adjacent a
5 portion of the surface, introducing a heated fluid into
the volume to heat the marine growth, moving the confined
volume over the surface to treat other portions of the
surface, and retaining the confined volume adjacent the
surface regardless of the orientation of the surface.
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2. A method in accordance with Claim 1, wherein the step
of retaining the volume adjacent the surface is carried
out utilising magnetism.
- 15 3. A method in accordance with any one of the preceding
claims, including the further step of exhausting heated
fluid from the confined volume as further heated fluid is
introduced to the confined volume.
- 20 4. A method in accordance with Claim 3, wherein the
heated fluid is exhausted into the surrounding
environment.
5. A method in accordance with any one of the preceding
25 claims, wherein the confined volume has a relatively small
depth dimension.
6. A method in accordance with Claim 5, wherein the
heated fluid forms a layer over the portion of the
30 surface.

7. A method in accordance with Claim 6, wherein the depth dimension of the confined volume is in the range of 2 to 50mm.

5 8. A method in accordance with Claim 7, wherein the depth dimension is in the range of 2 to 15mm.

9. A method in accordance with Claim 8, wherein the depth dimension is in the range of 2 to 10mm.

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10. A method in accordance with any one of the preceding claims, including the further step of varying the temperature of the heated fluid during treatment, whereby to determine the most effective temperature.

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11. A method in accordance with any one of the preceding claims, including the further step of varying a rate of introduction of the heated fluid during treatment, whereby to determine the most effective rate.

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12. A method in accordance with any one of the preceding claims, wherein the surface is a surface of a hull of a water-going craft.

25 13. A method in accordance with Claim 12, wherein the treatment is carried out under the water line of the craft while the craft is in the water.

30 14. A method in accordance with any one of the preceding claims, comprising the further step of conforming the confined volume to the shape of the surface as the confined volume is moved over the surface.

15. An apparatus for treating marine growth on a surface, including a confinement arrangement arranged to confine a volume adjacent a portion of the surface, the confinement arrangement being provided with an entry port
5 arranged to enable introduction of a heated fluid to the volume, the confinement arrangement being movable over the surface to enable treatment of other portions of the surface, and the confinement arrangement further including a retaining means which is arranged to retain the
10 confinement arrangement proximate the surface so that the volume remains adjacent the surface, regardless of the orientation of the surface.

16. An apparatus in accordance with Claim 15, wherein the
15 retaining means includes one or more magnets mounted to the confinement arrangement.

17. An apparatus in accordance with claims 15 or 16, the confinement arrangement further including an exhaust means
20 enabling heated fluid that is being introduced into the volume to be exhausted from the volume.

18. An apparatus in accordance with Claim 17, the exhaust means including a flexible seal which borders the
25 confinement arrangement.

19. An apparatus in accordance with any one of claims 15 to 18, the confinement arrangement further being arranged to conform with the shape of the surface as it is moved
30 over the surface.

20. An apparatus in accordance with Claim 19, wherein the confinement arrangement includes a flexible cover.

21. An apparatus in accordance with Claim 20, wherein the flexible cover includes a number of relatively rigid components linked together so that they can move relative to each other to facilitate flexibility of the cover.

22. An apparatus in accordance with any one of Claims 15 to 21, wherein the confinement arrangement is such that the confined volume has a relatively small depth dimension.

23. An apparatus in accordance with Claim 22, wherein the confinement arrangement is such that the heated fluid introduced into the confined volume forms a layer over the portion of the surface.

24. An apparatus in accordance with Claim 23, wherein the depth dimension is in a range of 2 to 50mm.

25. An apparatus in accordance with Claim 24, wherein the depth dimension is in a range of 2 to 15mm.

26. An apparatus in accordance with Claim 25, wherein the depth dimension is in a range of 2 to 10mm.

27. An apparatus for treating marine growth on a surface, including a housing for mounting a heating means to enable heating of a portion of the surface, and a retaining means arranged to retain the housing proximate the surface, the housing arrangement being moveable over the surface to enable treatment of other portions of the surface.

28. A method of treating marine growth on a surface,
including the steps of utilising a heating arrangement to
heat a portion of the surface, retaining the heating
arrangement against the surface and moving the heating
5 arrangement over the surface to treat other portions of
the surface.